DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 122 343 95 EA 007 982

AUTHOR Mazzarella, Jo Ann
TITLE The Principal's Role in Instructional Planning. NAESP School Leadership Digest Second Series, Number 8. ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number 23.
INSTITUTION National Association of Elementary School Principals, Washington, D.C.; Oregon Univ., Eugene. ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 76
CONTRACT OEC-0-8-080353-3571
NOTE 31p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209 ($2.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; Change Agents; *Curriculum Planning; Decision Making; Instructional Improvement; Instructional Innovation; Instructional Programs; Leadership Qualities; Leadership Responsibility; *Literature Reviews; Occupational Information; *Principals; Problem Solving; *Role Conflict; Teacher Administrator Relationship

ABSTRACT

Although the principalship has existed for almost a century and a half, principals' roles are as varied as their surroundings and almost as difficult to generalize about. No part of the principal's role is debated with more fervor than the role he or she must play in the instructional program. As school systems have become more bureaucratic, many principals have come to feel like little more than superintendents' clerks. Some of the current literature about the conflicting roles of principals and ways around the administrative roadblocks is discussed in this review. (Author/MLF)

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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP DIGEST

The Principal's Role in Instructional Planning

Jo Ann Mazzarella

Prepared by
ERIC Clearinghouse on
Educational Management

Published by
National Association of
Elementary School Principals

EA 007 982

Library of Congress Catalog Number: 72-12776
NAESP School Leadership Digest Second Series, Number Eight
ERIC/CEM Accession Number: EA 007 982
ERIC/CEM Research Analysis Series, Number Twenty-three

Printed in the United States of America, 1976
National Association of Elementary School Principals
1801 North Moore Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Additional copies are available from NAESP for $2.50.

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the National Association of Elementary School Principals for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the National Association of Elementary School Principals or the National Institute of Education.

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We regret to announce that there will be no future series of School Leadership Digest. Number 12 in the present series (second series) will be the last issue published.

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FOREWORD

Both the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management are pleased to continue the *School Leadership Digest*, with a second series of reports designed to offer school leaders essential information on a wide range of critical concerns in education.

The *School Leadership Digest* is a series of monthly reports on top priority issues in education. At a time when decisions in education must be made on the basis of increasingly complex information, the *Digest* provides school administrators with concise, readable analyses of the most important trends in schools today, as well as points up the practical implications of major research findings.

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The author of this report, Jo Ann Mazzarella, is employed by the Clearinghouse as a research analyst and writer.

Paul L. Houts
Director of Publications
NAESP

Stuart C. Smith
Assistant Director and Editor
ERIC/CEM

INTRODUCTION

What does a principal do? Ask a thousand principals and get a thousand different answers. From country school to urban ghetto, from affluent suburb to working-class neighborhood, principals' roles are as varied as their surroundings and almost as difficult to generalize about. As Houts put it in a 1975 article, "the principalship is just varied enough that, like India (or New York City), almost anything one says about it might be true."

No part of the principal's role is debated with more fervor than the role he or she must play in the instructional program. Most of the intensity centers around the contention that principals ought to be "instructional leaders." The task of the instructional leader is the improvement of curriculum and teaching. It is also to lead faculty in making decisions about the learning that is to go on in the school. These decisions may concern everything from needed changes in curriculum to evaluation of faculty, from the writing of performance-based objectives for the school to organization of inservice programs for teachers.

One imagines that the first school principals could rather easily juggle a number of roles in the smaller school and simpler world of the early nineteenth century. The "principal teacher" of a two- or three-room school could handle administrative duties and a sizable teaching load without feeling overburdened or confused about where emphasis ought to be placed.

As cities grew and schools along with them, the principal's role, too, grew in power and scope until well into the nineteenth century. The period from 1890 to the end of the First World War has been called by Reich the "golden age of the elementary school principalship." Reich maintains that "teacher selection, placement, promotion and salaries were almost completely under [the principal's] jurisdiction. . . .

He was able to modify the course of study and teaching methods whenever he saw fit."

During this period, the principal clearly had the power (though not always the desire) to be the instructional leader of the school. Many principals at this time exercised their power over teachers without restraint. They ruled as despots (benevolent, let us hope) over the teachers who were in their command.

Since that period, however, the principal who could do all things and be all things to everyone has gradually disappeared. The principal of today's large and complex school is overwhelmed by the daily housekeeping duties of "administrivia." Most principals simply don't have time for the instructional program.

As school systems have become more bureaucratic, many principals have come to feel like little more than superintendents' clerks. In the last ten years, teachers, parents, and students have demanded that principals relinquish control over what is taught and how it is to be taught. And, as if this weren't enough, in response to all these changes, preparatory programs for principals have come to stress administration rather than curriculum. The result has been the creation of principals who, bewildered by a myriad of new learning programs, teaching techniques, and methods of school organization, feel unprepared to be instructional leaders even if they have the power to be.

In spite of all these constraints, the vision of the principal as instructional leader has not vanished. In fact, discussion about whether the principal ought to be an instructional leader and what this instructional leader ought to do is still very much alive.

Although the principalship has existed for almost a century and a half, its duties are far from being chiseled in stone. As Wagstaff points out, in most states the duties of the principal are not defined at all. While this ambiguity creates much confusion and anxiety, it is also an opportunity. It means that legally, at least, principals are still free to interpret their role in the instructional program as they see fit.

Suggested Duties

In an average school organized in rather traditional ways, what can a principal who is concerned with improvement of the instructional program do? Suggestions abound.

Jacobson, Logsdon, and Wiegman have noted some of the most basic ways that principals can influence the instructional program:

- orienting faculty in new teaching techniques, both by planning and supervising inservice training programs and by holding demonstration lessons
- making classroom visits, evaluating and giving feedback to teachers
- involving parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators in developing the grading system
- supervising the testing program and making sure that tests are providing the kinds of information needed

John Jenkins sees the principal's position in the instructional program as still being based on his function as the "principal teacher." He suggests that principals

- schedule time for teachers to visit to discuss their concerns on a first-come first-served basis
- visit meetings of teaching teams and departments
- devote at least one faculty meeting a month to what is happening in each instructional area

Jenkins sees the instructional leader as one who is open to teachers' suggestions about curriculum and becomes involved in what they are doing.

Klopf, in a 1972 article, states that what he calls an "educational leader" communicates his or her own philosophy and goals to teachers so as to enable them to function more effectively. This leader also "develops a school environment rich with materials and human resources." Klopf presents a lengthy list of what he calls "functional competencies" of an educational leader. One most unusual item in this list is what might be termed the role of diagnostician. Klopf feels that principals must have the ability to assist the teaching staff in diagnosing the learning needs and styles of children and in identifying students with special needs, strengths, abilities, interests, and concerns.

Among the many functions suggested by Shuster and Stewart, a notable one is the role principals can play as liaison between the school and community. These authors view principals as both servants and leaders of their communities. They must see to providing the kinds of educational experiences communities want, while at the same time trying to change the outmoded or mistaken ideas citizens may have about their educational needs.

Needless to say, the duties listed here require much knowledge and expertise—more knowledge and expertise than many principals have. The principal who could perform all of them successfully would be an outstanding instructional leader indeed.

The Role of Innovator

No matter what one sees as the cure for today's educational ills, almost everyone agrees that the prescription is not merely "more of the same." Change is necessary if we are going to meet our educational goals, and many believe that the key figure in plans to make changes in the schools is the principal acting as instructional leader. Mitchell states:

> More than just competent management is necessary to bring about thoroughgoing reform in the long-term public interest.

> When all is said and done, nothing will change unless educational leadership begins to set the wheels of change in motion.

This idea is based on the knowledge that change does not just happen. Someone must instigate it and provide needed support and expertise while it is happening. The principal is in a unique position to do this.

Weischadle notes that the principal is especially able to sense when change is needed because teachers complain first to him of irrelevant programs and outdated approaches. Weiss suggests a plan by which principals instigate change whenever they sense any of these conditions:

- dissatisfaction by teachers and students with the present program
- failure of staff and students to utilize their full abilities
- pressure by parents

Weiss then suggests that the principal appoint a committee to explore school problems and possible solutions. The next steps are guiding staff in the development of a change proposal, bringing in necessary outside expertise, and keeping students and community informed.

Just as change is not likely to happen without the principal's leadership, it can be effectively undermined by the principal's disinterest or opposition, as Sarason points out:

> One can realign forces of power, change administrative structures, and increase budgets for materials and new personnel, but the intended effects of all these changes will be drastically diluted by principals whose past experiences and training, interacting with certain personality factors, ill prepare them for the role of educational and intellectual leader.

It appears that principals are in a unique position to either instigate or sabotage needed innovation.

New and Future Roles

As school organization and curricula change, the principal's role changes too, and in a few years an instructional leader may have entirely different duties than he has today.

One brand-new role for the principal is that in a multiunit school. Jacobson, Logsdon, and Wiegman note that the function of the principal in the multiunit school is that of coordinating the efforts of the unit leaders. This emphasis on the role of coordinator appears again and again in the literature on new roles for the principal.

Peterson delineates the duties of the principal in the school using team teaching. He stresses that the principal, though the final decision-maker in the school, must share many functions with the lead teachers, including evaluation of teachers and preparing new materials. Among the principal's duties that are unique to this type of school are making sure teams are properly organized, coordinating team leaders, and chairing an instructional improvement committee made up of lead teachers.

The role of coordinator appears again in Templeton's synthesis of the opinions of several authors about principals in unitized differentiated staffing schools. The consensus here seems to be that principals in this type of school must coordinate the work of various groups and resolve group conflict. Above all, they share decision-making with the entire staff.

Mattaliano outlines the role of the principal in the school that uses management by behavioral objectives. Here the principal must confer with those above (such as the superintendent) and with those below (teachers and chairmen) in an effort to determine what objectives should be set for the school. Again emphasis is on participatory planning.

Barth has noted the unique function of a principal in charge of a "pluralistic" school, that is, one that contains both traditional and open classrooms. A principal here must mediate between the different views of education. He must support each teacher's convictions and judgments (whether traditional or "open") and be able to interpret classrooms to parents.

Hedges feels that utilizing computers in the instructional program is one of the future roles of the principal. He believes that principals must become aware of the potentialities for using computers for such things as drill and practice,

individualized testing, and problem-solving. He suggests that administrators take a course in programming language, encourage teachers to do the same, and persuade the school board to rent a single computer terminal as a start.

The duties of an instructional leader are many and varied and changing every day. It is no wonder that Reich has called the principalship "such a vital and evolving institution that it never stands still long enough for its picture to be taken."

In spite of these many concrete suggestions concerning specific duties, there are no easy recipes for making an instructional leader. There are still many problems that no one knows how to solve. Sarason has listed some of the most difficult questions that plague the principal:

> In what relationship should he be to what children experience in classrooms? How does he get certain teachers to change their practices and attitudes? What does one do when one feels that a problem child is a reflection of a problem teacher? How should he handle the situation in which a complaint by a parent about a teacher may be legitimate? On whose side is the principal: child? teacher? system? neighborhood?

The number of things a principal can do to improve the instructional program is endless. For a principal who has the time, expertise, and fortitude necessary for tackling difficult problems, there is opportunity for unlimited growth.

SHOULD THE PRINCIPAL BE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER?

Feelings run strong in the controversy over whether principals can or ought to be instructional leaders in their schools. A vociferous majority maintains that principals have a great deal of influence on the learning that goes on in their schools and that they ought to exercise this influence more. Dissenters maintain that principals do not and should not have real power.

The Call to Leadership

One sweeping statement concerning the importance of the principal is found in the report issued by the Congress of the United States, Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity.

> In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school. He is the person responsible for all the activities that occur in and around the school building. It is his leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for learning, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. He is the main link between the school and the community and the way he performs in that capacity largely determines the attitudes of students and parents about the school. If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place; if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching; if students are performing to the best of their ability one can almost always point to the principal's leadership as the key to success.

This report gives a number of recommendations for "revitalizing the role of the school principal," the most important being that the principal should be given more autonomy and responsibility for the improvement of instruction.

In his examination of the principalship, Mitchell cites several studies of the principal's effect on the school and concludes that "the principal is easily identifiable as the key

determiner of climate in the school." He sees that one way principals influence learning is through teachers. When administrators offer teachers support and assistance in instruction, teachers are better able to do their jobs. Mitchell concludes, "There is no question but that the principal has a great influence on teacher morale and performance in the classroom and, consequently, on how well or whether pupils learn."

Goldhammer and his colleagues, after 291 interviews with practicing school principals, deduced that good principals can instill enthusiasm in staff, raise teacher morale, and lead teachers and parents in devising new strategies to overcome deficiencies in their schools. After an unusually complete and well-written analysis of the problems of the principal, they conclude that the leadership qualities of the principal can determine whether a school is a success or failure or, as they put it, a "beacon of brilliance" or "pothole of pestilence."

If principals can have such a dramatic effect on what goes on in the school, many authors maintain they ought to take seriously their roles as instructional leaders. Houts, writing on the 1975 Belmont conference on the principalship, reports that "almost all participants felt that principals should exercise an educational leadership role to a far greater extent than they presently are and spend much less time on managerial or housekeeping tasks." Houts and the participants based their recommendation on the contention that it is possible to reassign all the tasks of the principal to *other* members of the school staff—all tasks, that is, except *leadership*. On the subject of leadership, Houts reiterates Goldhammer's conclusion that "all of our studies of organization show that a leaderless organization is a disparate organization, one that cannot mobilize its resources to achieve its ends."

The Dissenters

A few authors advocate that the principal turn a deaf ear to the call for leadership. Hoeh, for example, suggests that the role of instructional leader is not appropriate for principals. He believes that basic curricular decisions are best made

by more qualified curriculum specialists and teachers. In his view, the principal is responsible for the creation of a "good climate for learning" in the school (including budget preparation, communications functions, and other administrative duties) and does not have time for the instructional program.

Myers maintains that the principal is not a leader in the school but rather a "functionary," one who, in effect, works *for* teachers and neither has nor ought to have power. Myers, instead of exhorting principals to become instructional leaders, holds that they should accept their subordinate roles as functionaries, forgetting their beliefs about what is best for the instructional program in favor of beliefs of the teachers.

Hoban, the most radical of the dissenters, maintains that the position of principal ought to disappear altogether. Advocating the "school without a principal," Hoban would turn instructional duties over to teachers and an elected dean of studies. He maintains that teachers will not follow the principal's lead because they believe that principals are selected merely because they are "ardent defenders of the status quo." Hoban holds that teachers are alienated by the principal's stereotype that "combines the stern values of the American Gothic with the easy ambience of Rotarian good cheer."

Before anyone quickly takes sides in this controversy, perhaps a reminder is in order that the situation as it now is should not be viewed as immutably fixed. Principals can be *given* more time and expertise, and these, coupled with a willingness to break out of their stereotype, can increase their influence with teachers. Certainly, whoever is in charge must be more than Hoeh's kind of building manager or Myers' functionary. To imply that today's principals must merely self-destruct or, perhaps like lemmings, march en masse into the sea, is patently unrealistic.

In spite of fierce power struggles between principals and teachers, there is still a leadership vacuum in many schools, and, as has been pointed out, a leaderless school is severely crippled. Only a person in the position of principal, whether appointed in the traditional way or elected like Hoban's dean of studies, can fill the leadership void.

ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

One reason the principal's role in the instructional program is written about with so much fervor is that most principals today have almost nothing at all to do with instruction. Although it is difficult to find data on the actual functioning of America's school principals, two studies, one by Fredericks and another by Cuttitta, indicate that New York City principals make very few decisions regarding curriculum. In a 1974 article, McNally summarizes the opinions expressed by a number of educators in a *National Elementary Principal* four-issue series on the principalship:

> There is one opinion, however, that is widely shared. For a variety of reasons, which are often (perhaps even usually) beyond the principal's control, principals are not exercising to any considerable degree the instructional and program leadership function that is widely agreed to be their most important responsibility.

It seems significant, too, that in writings about curriculum development the role of the principal is conspicuously ignored.

It is no wonder that few principals are instructional leaders. There are so many roadblocks to successful instructional leadership that one can hardly see the road.

Lack of Time, Power, and Preparation

One huge barrier to instructional leadership is lack of time for the instructional program. Many principals are burdened with such things as handling discipline problems, managing a food service, assigning rooms, arranging schedules, ordering books and supplies, and making up bus schedules. Overloaded with administrative details, many principals are forced to relegate the instructional program to the position of something to attend to "if there's time." For most principals, there rarely ever is.

Another roadblock is the fact that many school boards and superintendents do not empower their principals to make

decisions about the instructional program. They are not authorized to hire and fire faculty, make decisions about how money is to be spent, or choose teaching materials. As Gasson points out,

> The central office hierarchy regards the school principal as an agent of the superintendent. The principal may ostensibly run the school, but in reality he acts as a vehicle to transmit and implement edicts from the office. As a result, the principal and his teachers have become cogs fixed into a large, impersonal machine that depends on the machinist (superintendent) to keep every cog uniformly lubricated.

In this arrangement, opportunities for a principal to exercise instructional leadership are rare.

Goldhammer and his colleagues believe that "perhaps the most critical problem faced by the elementary school principal today is the general ambiguity of his position in the educational community." They point out that "there is no viable, systematic rationale for the elementary school principalship to determine expectations for performance; no criteria exists through which performance can be measured."

Role ambiguity blocks instructional leadership because many principals are not sure what instructional leaders do or even if they ought to be instructional leaders at all. Principals often escape from this role ambiguity by immersing themselves in their administrative duties, becoming managers and disciplinarians rather than instructional leaders.

One reason many principals are not instructional leaders is lack of preparation for the job. Many preparation programs are too theoretical and lack experience components. Most programs emphasize the administrative facets of the job rather than curriculum or human relations aspects. Mitchell, quoting a study by Gross, maintains that the academic programs now existing don't produce effective instructional leaders. He goes so far as to say,

> Increasingly it has been demonstrated that the effectiveness of the manager cannot be predicted by the number of degrees he holds, the grades he receives in school or the formal management education programs he attends. Academic achievement is not a valid yardstick by which to measure leadership potential.

Both Houts and Mitchell believe principals are not given enough experience in other areas besides education (such as social service and national government) to achieve the breadth and diversity of experience necessary for the job.

One answer to the problem of lack of preparation is inservice programs to give principals the training they so desperately need. And yet very few school systems provide such training for administrators, as McNally comments in a 1975 article:

> Any modern production-for-profit enterprise that failed to provide for the retraining of workers to cope with changing technology and product design would soon go out of business. Yet, well-conceived provisions for the inservice development of principals are rare in school systems in this country.

Inroads of Teachers, Parents, and Students

Many authorities on the principalship have noted that the principal's autonomy as an instructional leader is often eroded by collective bargaining. Epstein states, "Principals, having neither been consulted nor asked to participate, often learn many times too late that their duties and authority as principals have been considerably altered by the new teacher-board agreement." Wagstaff takes the argument a step further:

> As teachers gain power, principals tend to lose it. But there is no concomitant loss in responsibility. In other words, principals are still expected to develop and maintain good educational programs without the power to determine the best use of their primary resource—teachers.

Teachers are not the only ones wanting to share in decision-making about the instructional program. Increasing numbers of parents and other citizens also believe that they ought to have the final say about what goes on in the school. Students too demand a voice in curriculum matters. Pushed by superintendents from above, citizens from the side, and students and teachers from below, many principals feel unable to lead—or even to respond to so many conflicting demands. Mitchell says it well:

> The principal today is a man caught in the middle. He is supposed to speak for his school, his teachers, his pupils, and the neighborhood, hoping to provide for everybody the elements

of good education. But at the same time, he is supposed to represent the school board and the central office of the local school system and enforce their policies. It is not always easy to harmonize the two functions.

Myers claims that most principals have very little power to control the actions of teachers because they are able neither to punish nor reward teachers. He holds that principals who are unable to hire or fire or even control the teaching assignments of their faculties have no way of coercing faculty to implement curricular decisions. These principals feel powerless when faced with faculty opposition.

The barriers to becoming an instructional leader are many: lack of time, power, clear role definition, and preparation, plus the fact that almost everyone else seems to want to take over the leadership role. For today's principal, is being an instructional leader still possible?

> Yes, there is mountainous paperwork, many demands, increasing regulatory contracts, intensifying outside pressures, and only the prospect of more to come. Equally clear is the fact that the principal cannot hold back his commitment and merely let the "beast" take him down the road in whatever direction suits its fancy. *Weischadle*

There is some hope for the principal who, in spite of all the obstacles, chooses to travel down the road to instructional leadership. There are no easy or fast routes, but there are some techniques for vanquishing the "beast" and for getting around the roadblocks.

Help!

For a principal who is overburdened with administrative and disciplinary duties, the prospect of being an instructional leader is nothing more than a rosy dream. A great number of authors insist that to be true instructional leaders, principals must have assistance.

One way assistants can free the instructional leader is by taking over the principal's administrative functions. The report of the Senate Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity issued by Congress recommends the institution of a school administrator or manager "responsible for noneducational, administrative and managerial functions at the school."

The school manager need not have the qualifications or command the salary of the principal. Goldhammer, as quoted by Houts in their 1974 conversation, notes

> you don't need a master's degree to devise a playground schedule or to order the toilet paper. Schools have been penny wise and dollar foolish. They take a professional, who should command a professional salary, and burden him with chores that somebody with a good high school education could do. It's about time we reserve that professional capability for strictly professional responsibilities.

Trump presents an organizational model for a school of approximately 1,200 students. It includes four administrative positions:

a principal who spends 3/4 time on instructional improvement and 1/4 time on management

an assistant principal in charge of instruction

a building administrator and external relations director

a personnel administrator and activities director

Having this much help may seem like a fantasy to most principals, yet such organization is necessary if the many and complex duties tnat face the principal of a large school are to be completed.

One successful example of a principal-building ma..ager team is the duo who manage two elementary schools in Aurora, Colorado. McPhee explains that the building manager handles such things as ordering supplies, drawing up budgets, and supervising custodians and the lunch room. The regular principal, freed from administrative duties, reports that he is able to "more than double" the time he spends on instruction. Since the building manager earns less than the principal, and the pair jointly manage two schools, cost is less than in the traditional one principal-one school arrangement.

Another approach, described by Burgess, is that of hiring an assistant principal to help with curricular duties. In this arrangement, the principal delegates to the assistant principal such instructional duties as becoming informed of current curricular developments, arranging and coordinating inservice education, working with inexperienced teachers, or involving teachers in curricular planning. With such assistance, principals can spend as much or as little time on curriculum as they want to and still feel confident that the instructional program is receiving the attention it needs. It seems like a good solution for principals who lack sufficient interest in or preparation for managing instruction.

For schools in which financial constraints make the hiring of assistants impossible, Weischadle suggests that principals might obtain volunteer assistance from teachers aspiring to

the principalship who wish to gain administrative experience. Such a position might be accompanied by released time or suspension of certain duties.

The Autonomous School

If principals are to achieve true instructional leadership, they must be freed from domination by the central office and the school board. Shuster and Stewart maintain that the movement toward decentralization and community control of schools will produce what they call the "autonomous school." In an autonomous school, decisions regarding the instructional program would be made at the building level.

Shuster and Stewart envision decisions about the school, staff, and, most importantly, the budget being made by the principal with much input from faculty and a local advisory committee or school board. In this sort of school the principal would no longer be merely a clerk who handles edicts from the central office. Instead, he would lead citizens and staff in making decisions about education.

At a time when many others are bemoaning the principal's lack of power, Shuster and Stewart's assurance that the day of the autonomous school is slated to appear soon on the school calendar seems a bit too optimistic. Yet there *is* talk of decentralization in all facets of American life including education. The decentralized school certainly would be an answer to the roadblock of lack of power—that is, *if* the community that controls the school will realize the unique contribution that a principal-instructional leader can make and give him the share of power that the school board and central office now refuse to relinquish.

Sharing Power

Principals who have been given sufficient assistance and who are determined to become instructional leaders in spite of the many constraints placed on them will, nevertheless, be unable to succeed if they try to function as the kind of benevolent despots who occupied the principalship in the late nineteenth century. As Kenneth Jenkins puts it, "No longer

can the successful coach dream of 'retiring' to the sanctity of the main office, safe in the knowledge that he need only say 'jump' to hear a euphonious chorus of 'how high' from his (or her) faculty, students, and community."

Principals today can have real influence on their faculties only if they learn to work together with them in planning and making decisions about the instructional program. To be successful, a principal must be viewed as a facilitator or helper rather than "the boss." Paradoxically, the principal who wants to get around the roadblock of lack of power will have to share power with others.

Knoop and O'Reilly report that of 192 teachers they queried, only one wanted the principal to have sole responsibility for planning or evaluating curriculum. Most felt that these decisions ought to be made either by majority vote of teachers and principal or by the principal with a lot of input from teachers. Principals who involve staff in decision-making are not abdicating their responsibilities as instructional leaders but rather sharing them. Their function is to encourage, inspire, and prod teachers to join together and think, talk, and make decisions about the improvement of instruction. These sorts of activities are rare in schools and almost never take place unless performed under the guiding hand of the principal.

A study by Balderson offers a possible answer to Myers' contention that principals cannot be effective leaders because they cannot reward or punish teachers. In a survey of 426 teachers in 41 Canadian schools, he found that the reason teachers acquiesced to principal demands was their perception of the principals' expertise rather than any rewards or punishments. This finding has clear implications: principals can no longer control others through the use of pure power. They must rely on expertise and influence to convince others to work with them in getting things done.

Students, too, are insisting on contributing to curricular decisions. An administrator who wants to have real influence over students will make sure that they are involved in making decisions in the classroom and in committees. Anderson

suggests that one way teachers and students can be involved is to set aside the first 30 minutes of each day for the entire school to study and make recommendations concerning school problems. He maintains that one of the most effective ways a principal can lead is to provide *time* for teachers and students to make the changes that are needed.

Klopf, in a 1974 volume, discusses the duties of the principal, who is "the key person in the school responsible for staff development." Here the principal becomes an instructional leader by acting in the capacity of facilitator—one who helps others achieve important goals.

Klopf maintains that the principal must perform such duties as

- helping staff and community develop an assessment program
- helping staff and community develop educational goals
- helping teachers develop procedures for diagnosing the learning needs of children
- providing released time for inservice training
- training teachers in new behaviors

Since staff development requires that the principal help others and provide them with opportunities for growth, it can be another way for the principal to share his power.

Preparation

Two innovative programs offer promise that principals can be trained to perform the complex and demanding role of instructional leader.

Davis describes a program for the preparation of secondary school administrators at Southern Connecticut State College. This program has an emphasis on the study of instruction and curricular design, modern school organization (such as team teaching or flexible scheduling), and human relations. The program uses field experience and simulation exercises as well as small-group dynamics sessions to help principals learn to

handle the kind of problems they must face as instructional leaders. Although evaluative data are not available, this experiential program appears to be more useful for training principals than are the current theoretically based programs.

But what about principals serving in schools now? Even more important than preservice programs are inservice programs for the vast numbers of principals who are right now faced with the task of being educational leaders.

Burnes and her colleagues describe an extremely promising pilot program designed to train school principals to be educational leaders. The 1972-73 Chase Program consisted of intensive work by 12 participants who were at the same time actively involved in their roles as principals in New York schools. The program included such objectives as enabling participants to

- become aware of themselves as educational leaders
- define educational goals and objectives
- conduct staff development programs
- assess the competencies of their staffs
- become competent in curriculum development

Also stressed were human relations, communication skills, tolerance of conflict, and openness to the ideas and opinions of others. Techniques used included role playing, analyzing videotapes of themselves and others, staff sessions for the development of objectives and strategies, and visiting and making observations in other schools. Significantly, the kinds of strategies rated least effective by participants were reading, traditional types of courses, and use of consultants, yet these are the strategies most often used today in inservice education.

The program was unanimously rated as "a significant growth experience" by participants, who felt that it was directly responsible for several improvements in their schools: increased staff involvement in planning, improved staff morale, development of alternative educational programs, institution of new courses, and creation of a humanistic education program for the entire school.

CONCLUSION

When asked by Brown how the principalship had changed over the last several years, one principal replied simply, "It's harder now."

Certainly that sums it up. It's harder to handle the complexity of things that need to be done in the time available, harder to act when one's autonomy is being eroded, harder to know what to do and how to do it when one's role is ambiguous and changing every day. And in the face of all this, harder, certainly, to be a true instructional leader.

Yet instructional leadership is possible—if not now, at least in the future. A principal, benefitting from good preservice and inservice preparation programs, working in an "autonomous school," with sufficient assistance and a willingness to lead rather than rule, can have enormous influence on the instructional program.

Even in the most perfect situation, of course, the job of instructional leader will be hard, as all jobs in our complex society are hard and likely to get harder. And yet, if education is necessary (and how are we to survive without it?), then decisions about education must be made, and someone has to make them. If principals don't lead their schools and communities in making these decisions, who will?

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